

**MARYLAND GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON
HISPANIC AFFAIRS
Meeting Minutes**

Date: Wednesday, April 21, 2010

Time: 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Place: Jeffrey Building – StateStat Room
16 Francis Street, Fourth Floor
Annapolis, Maryland

Present: Chair Y. Maria Welch, Vice Chair Ricardo Martinez, Veronica A. Cool, Mariana Cordier, Christina M. Diaz-Malone, Maria T. Pinto Johnson, Carmen Ortiz Larsen, Elizabeth Ysla Leight, Hector G. Manzano, Nicolas H. Ramos V, Lea Ybarra

Ex-Officios Present: Susan Spinnato

Absent: Elizabeth C. Bellavance, Javier G. Bustamante, Richard V. Cook, Lydia Espinosa Crafton, Ricardo Alberto Flores, Colonel Robert L. Hylton, Luisa Montero-Diaz, Sonia E. Mora, Arelis A. Pérez

Staff Present: Jessy Mejia, Agnes M. Smith

I. Call to Order and Greetings

The meeting was called to order by Chair Y. Maria Welch who welcomed the Commissioners. She noted that the Commission meeting was being held in the very StateStat room where the Governor meets with State departments to go over priority goals, review progress and complete changes to make sure government is working efficiently and smoothly. Chair Welch thanked the StateStat team for opening up the facility and making it accessible to the Commission.

Commissioners introduced themselves and the counties they represent to the community.

II. Hispanic Commission Updates

Chair Welch noted that the meeting was a follow-up of a meeting recently held with Lt. Governor Anthony Brown and fellow colleagues from various Hispanic Business Chambers across the State. They will be focusing on Maryland's Minority Business Enterprise Program as it relates to Hispanic entrepreneurs.

Administrator Jessy Mejia gave a business update which included House Bill 34 State Government – Commemorative Month – Hispanic Heritage Month in which Chair Welsh

was heavily involved with this legislation. She noted that the Commission received very heavy support for the legislation which passed on the last day of session. There is now an official recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month. Administrator Mejia spoke about the Census Statewide Outreach Program which had a successful outreach to the community. The Commission collaborated with Montgomery and Prince George's Counties. There was a whole month of media campaign in these counties. The Commission was on the radio, answering phone calls, etc. She noted that beside from the media campaign, in the month of March there was a festival which was successful as well. There was a Washington Post report on the festival in which the Governor's Commission on Hispanic Affairs received a favorable mention. The article provided a kind of backdrop for regular Hispanic folks who had an issue with the Census. She noted that the Commission worked primarily with Montgomery and Prince George's Counties since this is where the most heavily populated Latinos reside. They did check in with other counties and Baltimore City about their Census outreach. She noted that there is a website that will allow the Commission to keep track of the numbers.

III. Speakers

Mr. Andrew Ratner, Communications Director, Maryland Department of Planning

Mr. Andrew Ratner informed the Commission that they want to spread the word about Plan Maryland that the Department of Planning is involved with. In the mid 1970's the State Legislature created the authority for a state growth plan. Local jurisdiction, all have comprehensive plans but the State does not have one. He noted that forty years later it's time to have a State Growth Plan. He noted that as seen over the years development keeps going farther and farther into the countryside. The effects of this shows in the traffic jams, pollution, bay, air quality, affordable housing, etc. Mr. Ratner noted that what one county does effects the neighboring county. He noted that there has to be greater coordination. Mr. Ratner noted that they are having a series of meetings and forums planned. He noted that by this time next year to have a Plan Maryland. Mr. Ratner noted that the federal government has HUD, transportation, etc. working together. There is a \$150 million grants package in regards to growth. He noted that what one agency does affect the others.

There was a discussion about what the Commission could do to help. It was also noted to make sure that the planners are culturally aware.

Ms. Zenita Wickham Hurley, Maryland Department of Transportation

Ms. Zenita Wickham Hurley spoke about the disparities study and the Minority Business Enterprise Program. Ms. Hurley noted that there is legislation that mandates MDOT in conjunction with the Attorney General's Office with the purpose of a disparity study is both statistical and anatomical data. She noted that the National Economic Research Association (NERA) will be doing the anatomical data study. Ms. Hurley noted there was a type of study during the period 2004-2008. The 2006 study found the program is continuing to be reshaped. She noted that some form of the MBE application is on-line. Ms. Hurley noted that MDOT at headquarters in Hanover, Maryland holds MBE Certification Workshops free of charge.

Chair Welch thanked Ms. Hurley and suggested that the Commission put together a workshop just for the Hispanic community.

Commissioner Carmen Larsen informed the Commission that in regards to the MBE Certification Program there is language proficiency, MBE Program has a different interpretation in the different agencies, the Disparities Study is looking at understanding the number of Hispanics in different groups, there is a question about the sub-goals and the Hispanic Chamber has received complaint calls from MBE certified businesses.

There was a discussion how to better serve the Hispanic community. It was noted that outreach is historically based on demand.

Ms. Hurley noted that the MBE goal for the State of Maryland is 25% with the State reaching 22%. There was a suggestion to the Commission to find out how many Hispanic MBEs participated in the snow removal.

There was a discussion about the legislation that mandates the sub-goals for the MBE. In October 2010 they will list prime contracts and sub contracts.

Chair Welch informed the Commission that she wanted to get information and recommendations from everyone. This is a call to action for all. She noted that the Commission had a legislative victory.

Christine Bivens, Minority Business Enterprise

Ms. Christine Bivens informed the Commission that all State agencies must report. She noted that they know how many contracts go to Hispanic, Asian, etc. Ms. Bivens informed the Commission that the sub-goals were set up under Governor Glendening. She also noted each agency must structure the procedures.

Mr. Wendell Sutton noted that the bill had a program for Spanish speaking only. They have sixty Spanish speaking small businesses. He noted that they want to get more and more Spanish business certified.

Chair Welch thanked everyone and noted that the Hispanic community needs to be informed.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.